

## ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION TECHNIQUES & SKILLS

1. **Keep the purpose of the investigation in mind.**
  - a. To determine **WHO** was injured. **WHEN**, **WHERE** and **HOW** did it happen. **WHAT** materials or equipment were involved. **WHY** did it happen.
  - b. To reveal causes so reoccurrence can be prevented.
2. Approach the investigation with an **open mind**. (It will be obvious if you have preconceptions about the individuals involved or the facts.)
  - a. Do not attempt to place blame.
  - b. Stay away from conjecture.
3. **Promptness** will reduce possible problems.
  - a. Destruction of physical evidence (changed work site).
  - b. Forgetfulness of witnesses or victim.
  - c. Interjection of opinion or conjecture by witnesses or victim after they evaluate the accident from their perspective.
  - d. Witnesses and victim talking together and getting confused about what they **know** and what they have been told by others concerning the accident.
4. **Go to the scene**. (Just because you are familiar with the location or the victim's job, do not **assume** that things are always the same.)



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4. Interview the people **involved** (victim, witnesses, people involved with the process such as forklift driver, mechanic, janitor and so on.)
  - a. ***Attempt*** to do the interview at the site. However, some circumstances may not permit on-site interviews due to noise, lack of privacy or congestion. If on-site interviews are not possible, then use other techniques.
    - i. Combination (Look and then go somewhere else to talk)
    - ii. Photos
    - iii. Blueprints
    - iv. Sketches
  - b. **Put the person at ease.**
    - i. Explain the purpose and your role.
    - ii. ***Sincerely*** express concern regarding the accident and desire to prevent a similar occurrence.
    - iii. Express to the individual that the information he gives is important.
    - iv. Be friendly, understanding and **open-minded**.
    - v. Be calm and unhurried.
  - c. Interviews should be **private** and in a **neutral location**.



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d. **Let the individual talk.**

i. Ask background information such as name, job, home address and so on.

ii. Ask witness to tell what happened.

**DO NOT** ask leading questions.

**DO NOT** interrupt.

**DO NOT** make expressions (facial or verbal) of approval or disapproval

iii. Ask questions to clarify particular areas or to ask “**why**”. Do not put the person on the defensive. Try to avoid “**yes**” and “**no**” questions.

iv. Ask for their suggestions.

v. Repeat the facts and sequence of events back to the person to avoid any misunderstanding.

vi. Notes should be taken very carefully and as casually as possible. Let the individual read them if he desires.

vii. Recordings should only be made with the knowledge of the witness. (Some people may be very intimidated by recorded interviews and not speak as freely.)

viii. Conduct the interview with a statement of appreciation for their contribution. Ask them to contact you if they think of anything else.

ix. Do not hesitate to reinterview.

x. Avoid reenactments of the accident if at all possible.

## Appendix J

NEAR MISS

PROPERTY DAMAGE ONLY

FIRST AID

### ACCIDENT REPORTING, INVESTIGATION AND PREVENTION

Investigating and correcting the cause(s) of a “serious injury” accident is necessary, but investigating serious accidents is a “postmortem” investigation where someone is already badly hurt. It is essential we all become aware of and correct unsafe conditions and unsafe job operations which could cause an accident and to take action to prevent them from occurring.

There are several “early warnings” we must all be aware of, which if corrected will minimize the chance of “serious” accidents.

#### “EARLY WARNINGS”

##### “NEAR MISS ACCIDENTS”

An incident where no employee is hurt but could have been.

##### “FIRST AID”

An accident where doctor’s care is not required and the employee returned immediately to work.

##### “PROPERTY DAMAGE ONLY”

An accident in which only equipment or property is damaged but there is no personal injury.

### RELATIONSHIP TO SERIOUS INJURIES

#### STATISTICS SHOW

##### **FOR EVERY**

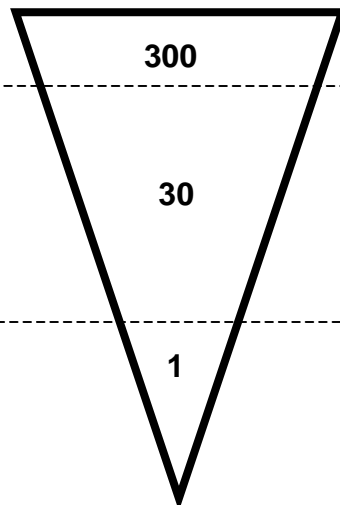
300 “Near Miss,” “First Aid,” or “Property Damage only” accidents,

##### **THERE ARE**

30 injuries requiring a doctor’s care

##### **AND**

1 serious injury, amputation or fatality.



#### HISTORICALLY

The attitude is almost “Who cares. Some accidents are part of doing business.”

Supervisors, co-workers and family are all concerned, but generally the attitude is “Boy, it’s lucky you were not hurt worse.”

Everyone is concerned how the accident happened and how to prevent similar accidents in the future.

### IT DOESN’T MAKE SENCE TO IGNORE 331 ACCIDENTS WHEN WE CAN PREVENT THEM

The real difference between the very serious accident and the “near miss” is luck, reflexes, preparation and prevention. We can’t control “luck” or “reflexes”, but we can prevent accidents by paying attention to the “early warnings”. We can correct the unsafe condition, safe guard dangerous equipment adequately, change job procedures to minimize employees’ risk and stay alert to protect ourselves and other co-workers.

## Appendix K

(your agency's letterhead, if available)

### GENERAL SAFETY RULES

**POLICY:** As a basis for employee responsibilities and participation in our agency's loss prevention program, the general safety rules listed below will apply to all employees. Your cooperation in voluntarily complying with these rules and all other safety responsibilities will be appreciated and expected.

- 1) Possession of firearms on agency property or in agency vehicles is prohibited.
- 2) The use or possession of alcohol, drugs or other controlled substances on the job is prohibited.
- 3) Report all injury accidents to your supervisor **immediately**. Also report all other accidents and near misses to your supervisor.
- 4) Report unsafe conditions, procedures and acts to your supervisor **immediately**
- 5) Each employee is responsible for good housekeeping. Keep your work area in a clean, uncluttered state. Do not walk by a situation of poor housekeeping if it can be easily corrected or needs immediate attention such as spills on floors, ice on steps and so on.
- 6) Obey all warning tags and signs. They are there because hazards exist.
- 7) No employee should take chances on the job which could endanger their personal safety and health or the safety and health of co-workers.
- 8) If an established job procedure must be deviated from, supervisory approval must be obtained and an alternative, temporary job procedure must be agreed upon. This alternative job procedure must not create any new or additional hazards or unnecessarily expose employees to hazards.
- 9) If you are unsure of your job procedures, do not take chances. Ask your supervisor for instructions or training.
- 10) Do not operate machinery or use tools you are not qualified to use.
- 11) Do not enter hazardous areas you are not authorized to enter.
- 12) Use all personal protective equipment and devices required and provided.
- 13) Become familiar with and conduct your work activities in accordance with these general safety rules and other specific safe operating procedures which are applicable.
- 14) Above all be **ALERT** and be **RESPONSIBLE!** Your safety and health depends on it.

## Appendix L

<b>HIGH RISK JOB LIST WORKSHEET</b>		
AGENCY	AGENCY SUPERVISOR	
<b>OCCUPATIONS AND JOBS</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>REMARKS (notes)</b>
OCCUPATION:		
JOBS: 1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
OCCUPATION:		
JOBS: 1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
OCCUPATION:		
JOBS: 1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
OCCUPATION:		
JOBS: 1		
2		
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## Appendix L